

## How Do I Find Out About Genetic Services?

Genetic services are offered at medical centers and satellite clinics throughout North Carolina. For more information about services in your area, contact the genetic service provider or genetic counselor listed below.

You may also contact the Genetics and Newborn Screening Program directly:

N.C. Department of Health  
and Human Services  
Division of Public Health  
Genetics and Newborn Screening Unit  
1928 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-1928  
Toll-Free  
**1-866-431-7434**



## Why Has My Child Been Referred to a Genetic Clinic?

Many children and adults come to a genetic clinic because of learning delays, health problems or birth defects.

Your child has been referred to the genetic clinic by

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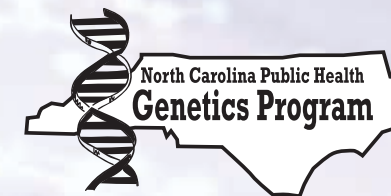
Reasons for referral include:

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# Genetic Services

*Your Questions  
Answered*



State of North Carolina  
Department of Health and Human Services  
Division of Public Health  
[www.ncdhhs.gov](http://www.ncdhhs.gov)

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## What is Genetics?

Genetics is about features that are passed down through families. Some examples are eye color, blood type and height. Medical and health problems like birth defects, mental retardation and abnormal growth can also be genetic – even if they have never been seen before in a family.

## What is Genetic Counseling?

Genetic counseling involves learning more about the genetic factors that can affect the health of you, your children and other family members. A genetic counselor is trained to answer your questions.

## When Can Genetic Services Help?

### *Planning a Pregnancy*

You can learn more about factors that influence a baby's health, such as:

- + mother's health and age;
- + family medical history; and
- + alcohol, illegal drugs and certain medicines used by the mother.



### *During a Pregnancy*

You may talk with a genetic counselor about your baby's risk for certain birth defects, genetic conditions and health problems. Tests may be available to help you learn more information.

### *Concerns About a Child or Family Member*

A genetic evaluation may be part of your search for answers. A correct diagnosis – knowing the cause – can be an important step in:

- + planning treatment;
- + being aware of future health concerns;
- + learning whether a condition is likely to occur again in a family; and
- + finding additional information and support.

## What is a Genetic Evaluation?

A genetic evaluation is a clinic appointment with a medical geneticist and a genetic counselor. Genetic evaluations are held in satellite clinics or in genetic clinics at major medical centers. A genetic evaluation often includes:

- + review of the family medical history and medical records; and
- + physical examination of the child or family member.



During the clinic appointment, the geneticist and genetic counselor will also:

- + share information about available tests;
- + talk with you about test results;
- + inform you of risks to other family members or future children;
- + answer your questions; and
- + suggest other doctors or services that may benefit you or your child.

